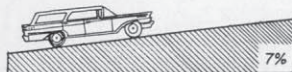


GRADE



The road was designed with a ruling grade generally less than 5% and never exceeding 7%, less than half as steep as the Fall River Road.

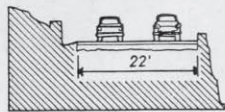
TURN RADIUS



Minimum radii for open curves was 100', and 200' on blind curves. Many curves were designed to sweep across but not dominate, the landscape.

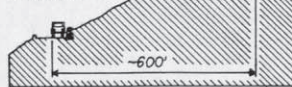
ROAD WIDTH

Unlike the single-track Fall River Road, Trail Ridge Road was designed as a two-lane with a 22' roadbed and 3' ditches in cut sections.



ELEVATION GAIN

The roadway was largely built into the hillside, elevated on rock fill once it reached the tundra. Long continuous curves were used to gain elevation.



PULLOUTS



The commodious stone-walled turnouts, often located on major curves, provided ample space for visitors to take in the views.

TRAIL RIDGE ROAD - 1932

Trail Ridge Road provides spectacular views of the majestic scenery of Rocky Mountain National Park. It is the highest continuous motorway in the United States, with more than eight miles lying above 11,000' and a maximum elevation of 12,183'. The name "Trail Ridge Road" derives from its proximity to historic pathways used by native peoples to cross the Rocky Mountains.

Trail Ridge Road was designed to replace the Fall River Road, which proved inadequate for modern motor travel as soon as it opened in 1920. Trail Ridge Road was designed to have more gentle grades, broader curves, and a greater variety of scenic experiences. The sunny, ridge-top location would also reduce snow accumulation and allow Trail Ridge Road to open earlier than its shady, snow-laden predecessor.

Trail Ridge Road was constructed between 1926 and 1932 through the collaborative efforts of the National Park Service and the Bureau of Public Roads (now the Federal Highway Administration). Construction crews had to contend with imposing terrain, harsh weather, short working seasons, and stringent design criteria, which were intended to ensure that the road would "lie lightly on the land," displaying the region's rich scenic diversity with minimal impact on the natural environment. Trail Ridge Road opened in July 1932, providing motorists with access to impressive views, memorable wildlife viewing opportunities, and spectacular high mountain terrain.

